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This is the Super Heroes Issue!!! I believe every school employee is a superhero. Read it and enjoy. You might see someone you know.

Superheroes Spotted in Eastern North Carolina

In eastern North Carolina we're not waiting for a comic-book hero to save the day in our schools. We have REAL heroes working every day to ensure students get a great education. From the classroom to the bus route to the cafeteria, to the custodial staff, to the school secretary, to the community, NCAE members are making a difference.

Education is a special calling. Helping young minds navigate their world is a wonderful way to spend a life. The trick is to keep it challenging for all involved, while drowning out the steady drone of doubt permeating so much of the American way these days. Education employees are intervening in the lives of children every day and some of them have been doing it for 30 and 35 years under conditions that would crush the spirit of a mere mortal.

There are many **Superheroes in schools** all over eastern North Carolina, but here are a few I want to highlight this month:

- **Mrs. Deborah Lightfield** an art educator at Jones Senior High School who has traveled around the world to places like Russia, China and Kenya, but now inspires students to see the world through art.
- **Dr. Pascal Mubenga**, principal at Jones Senior High School who led a school that was falling behind to a School of Distinction. His motto is "Whatever It Takes".
- **Mr. Keith Cannon**, a PE teacher at Vanceboro Farm Life Elementary School who has been successful in winning Grants for the physical education department to develop Action Based Learning Lab.
- **Mrs. Rebecca Sanchez**, a Kindergarten teacher at Trent Park Elementary School who realizes that Kindergarten is a very tough year. Many students come into school and it is the very first time they have entered a structured social setting. Yet she works hard to make every day worthwhile learning experience for each child.
- **Mrs. Sharon Fulcher**, Guidance Counselor at Bogue Sound Elementary School who prepares students with lessons on cooperation skills, and a Positive Kids program that enhances student self-esteem by

enabling them to positively solve problems that they encounter.

- **Mr. Larry Vallance**, Media Specialist at Morehead City Primary School, known to all the children as “Mr. Larry” provides a warm, relaxed and inviting atmosphere for all the students and staff.
- **Dr. Nelson V. Hare**, a Science Teacher at Jacksonville High School, helps students excel in Anatomy & Physiology, Chemistry, and Physical Science.
- **Mrs. Leta Colleen Hicks**, an Exceptional Children's Language Arts, and Exceptional Children's Math at Hunter's Creek Middle School who truly enjoys a challenge, but feels blessed to work with her students every day.
- **Mrs. Carolyn Squires** a Guidance Counselor at Pamlico County High School helps high school students daily with the many issues that may face a teenager.
- **Mrs. Susan Howard** a Fifth Grade Math and Science teacher at Fred A. Anderson Elementary School who should be known as “Wonder Woman” because she works wonders with her students.

They're all superheroes

The film “Waiting for Superman” suggests that nobody's doing anything for America's children; we're all just waiting for a superhero to rescue them.

Not so: real-life superheroes are at work every day. And while eastern North Carolina seems to be particularly blessed with great educators, there are plenty of others around the state.

Spotlight on NCAE Member Benefits

You and your family deserve the best. That's why when it comes to NCAE member benefits, superior service is the #1 priority. No matter what your financial goals, you can always count on our experience to provide you with access to a vast array of valuable money-saving programs.



In this issue I want to turn the spotlight on Sally's Beauty Supply



Sally Beauty Supply has over 5,000 products for hair, skin and nails in over 2,000 locations. Call 1-800-ASK-SALLY to find the store nearest you.

\$5 off any purchase of \$25 or more. **Coupon required**

Why “Superman” film should be waiting for “Batman”

This was written by Susan Graham, a teacher of family and consumer science (formerly "home ec") for 25 years. She is a National Board-certified teacher, a former regional Virginia teacher of the year, and a fellow of the [Teacher Leaders Network](#). This appeared on [the Teacher magazine website](#).

By Susan Graham

I was "[Waiting for Superman](#)," but I was disappointed. A lot of other people who see this movie -- which paints a distorted view of urban education and unfairly portrays teachers -- are going to be disappointed too, because it should have been entitled "Waiting for Batman."

Waiting for Superman director Davis Guggenheim is just too young to have met the Superman and Batman from my formative years. He should watch more TV because he's got his superheroes mixed up.

When I was a kid, I came home from school and watched the black and white [1950s Superman series reruns](#). The Superman I came to admire didn't go around kicking butt, taking names, and self promoting.

He watched, he waited, and when all other resources had been exhausted, Clark Kent dashed into a phone booth and stripped down to his tights. Superman believed in the people around him. He seemed to think of them as decent honest citizens who were capable of making their own choices.

So when Superman did step in, he didn't impose his own solutions until human options had run out and innocent people were going to be hurt. Then he simply removed the barriers, got things back on track, and made it possible for everyday folk to continue to pursue truth, justice and the American Way.

Once ordinary humans could get a grip on the situation, Superman slipped out of the picture, put on his Clark Kent double breasted suit and horn-rimmed glasses and went back to his day job at the Daily Planet. He had no agenda of his own to impose. He didn't try to fix Earthlings so that they become wannabe Kryptonians. Superman had the power to reshape our world, but what he seemed to want to do is to blend in and help out.

I was a teenager when [Batman](#) stepped out of the comic books and onto the TV screen.

Bruce Wayne, "millionaire, playboy, industrialist, and philanthropist" saw his parents murdered and he vowed to revenge their death by imposing law, order and righteousness on the

criminal element in Gotham City. Wayne put on his Batman cape, fought the bad guys, and then retreated to the Bat Cave.

I never really cared much for Bruce Wayne. I thought he was arrogant and aloof and I never bought into his elitist perspective of the world around him. He had the money, the power, and the resources to work with those around him to make a better world, but he chose to impose his personal agenda of truth and justice. He used his position of entitlement to put on a mask and work outside the system. Batman was willing to rescue the little people from evil, but he never seemed care to mix with them after hours. As both Bruce and Batman, it was always sort of all about him.

The one thing Superman and Batman had in common was a secret identity. Bruce Wayne lived a reclusive life and had the Bat Mask going for him, so it's plausible that he managed anonymity. But back when I was watching those old Superman episodes, it really bothered me that the entire staff of the Daily Planet could be so oblivious.

How could they not notice that Superman and "mild mannered reporter Clark Kent" were one and the same? Lois Lane, an investigative reporter, who pined for Superman and snubbed Kent, never questioned the coincidental but consistent disappearances of Kent when Superman showed up. Jimmy Olsen, cub photographer, archived images of Superman without ever noticing the Man of Steel was the spitting image of Clark Kent without glasses. Editor Perry White had a reporter with X-ray vision, but never recognized or utilized the potential power behind Kent's dependable but unobtrusive work habits. What a waste!

And that brings me back to *Waiting for Superman*. Education stakeholders, like the staff of the Daily Planet, aren't paying much attention.

There is an army of Supermen and Superwomen among us disguised in alphabet sweaters, apple jewelry and UNICEF/Save the Children ties.

Teachers are intervening in the lives of children every day and some of them have been doing it for 35 and 40 years under conditions that would crush the spirit of a mere mortal.

They're not out there trying to "fix" children so that they look more like little Bruce Wayne Juniors. Most teachers are doing all they can to empower children to define and pursue their own understanding of truth, justice and the American Way.

All we ask is that we be allowed to do our job without being weakened by the Kryptonite of manipulation by power brokers, without exploitation by politicians, and [without denigration by the media](#).

We'd prefer to stay in our classrooms with the kids, but there are over 4 million of us out there and before this is over, some of us

just may have to take off our glasses and put on our tights.

Special Thanks to the following:

All NCAE members and other education employees. You are all Superheroes.

The staff at Arapahoe Charter School a public school of choice serving approximately 345 children in kindergarten through eighth grade and a School of Excellence. They do so much with so little. The current Charter School Law prohibits charter schools access to the capital outlay funding given to traditional public schools and also prohibits the use of state funds for the purchase of facilities.

One of my favorite quotes is by Pat Conroy from his book Prince of Tides:

“There is no word in the language I revere more than teacher. My heart sings when a kid refers to me as his teacher, and it always has. I’ve honored myself and my whole family by becoming one.”